

veto legislation that contains his own benchmarks for success in Iraq, ensures our troops have the training they need, and fully supports both our veterans and our soldiers wounded in combat.

Our legislation also commits additional funding to fighting the forgotten war in Afghanistan. Over the last 4 years, the Bush administration has redirected funds and troops away from Afghanistan, forgetting that al Qaeda and the Taliban were the ones that attacked our Nation in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats will not allow President Bush to continue to pursue these failed policies. We will insist on a new direction.

BURMA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has been calling for prompt action at the U.N. Security Council to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Burma. Unfortunately, other member nations have been slow to take up the call. One European nation even suggested recently that the world should wait for the situation in Burma to become urgent and acute before we take action.

Mr. Speaker, Burma reportedly has close to a million IDPs, internally displaced people. Isn't that urgent? Over 3,000 villages have been brutally destroyed by the military dictatorship. Isn't that an acute situation? The latest story out of Burma tells of four teenage girls brutally raped and then thrown into prison by the military rulers, more evidence of their systematic sexual violence there. Isn't that an urgent problem?

Mr. Speaker, there has been enough talk and enough delay. It is time for the world to take action and end the humanitarian crisis in Burma.

CONGRATULATING MANCHESTER WEST HIGH SCHOOL

(Mr. HODES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to congratulate Manchester West High School in Manchester, New Hampshire, and Region 14 Applied Technology Center team from Peterborough, New Hampshire, on their victory at the regional FIRST Robotics Competition this past week in Manchester. FIRST is an acronym for For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology.

This remarkable program was developed in New Hampshire and has now spread to 1,500 high schools nationwide. It encourages young people to become actively involved with engineering and technology. FIRST brings innovative companies together with kids, teaching and inspiring them to pursue careers in advanced science. The brilliant stu-

dents who participate actually build robots and then enter the robots in a series of competitions against the creations of other teams.

I salute the creativity and technological savvy of the winning teams. Congratulations to Manchester West and the Region 14 team and to FIRST on its aspirational mission. FIRST is helping inspire the next generation of technology innovators which our country depends on to remain competitive in our global economy.

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IN MEMORY OF THE SEVEN OHIOANS WHO PERISHED IN GEORGIA BUS ACCIDENT

(Mr. JORDAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in solemn remembrance of seven Ohioans whose lives were cut short by a tragic bus accident on the morning of Friday, March 2, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia. Though words cannot express the depth of their loss, we honor their memory and offer our condolences to their families, friends, teammates, and classmates of these seven individuals:

David Betts of Bryan, Ohio
Scott Harmon of Elida, Ohio
Cody Holp of Arcanum, Ohio
Jerry and Jean Niemeyer of Columbus Grove, Ohio
Tyler Williams of Lima, Ohio, and
Zack Arend of Oakwood, Ohio.

In the midst of this tragedy, I was heartened to see the selfless way these families and communities pulled together to support each other in a time of need. It reminds me of what is special about America.

I was also humbled by the outpouring of kindness from concerned families in Georgia and around the country. Just minutes after the accident, complete strangers were opening their homes to our families and offering their condolences and prayers.

While we grieve their passing, we know that they will live forever in the hearts of their loved ones and will eternally be remembered by the Bluffton University family and the people of Bluffton, Allen County and west central Ohio.

MEDICARE

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, access to the highest quality health care for our seniors under Medicare is one of the most important issues facing this Congress. Unfortunately, the Bush White House has sought to undermine the great Medicare safety net by privatizing a great deal of health care under the Medicare system, turning it over to HMOs.

Just last week the former director of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services from 2001 to 2003 spoke at a conference in Tampa and a reporter caught him on record saying that this privatization effort "was done to prime the pump and to get people to go back to HMOs. But it's a much bigger subsidy than we intended."

You see, these private plans receive about 11 percent more per beneficiary than the government spends in original Medicare. And this director said that he had meant for the subsidy to be about half that.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of work to do to stand up for our seniors and ensure the Medicare safety net works for everyone.

WAR SUPPLEMENTAL CONTAINS GOODIES

(Mr. CARTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER. There is talk that the \$100 billion war supplemental will include an extra \$20 billion in goodies. Such projects are seemingly irrelevant to the mission our soldiers are expected to carry out. For example:

\$60 million for the California and Oregon salmon fishery disaster of '06;

\$400 million for timber revenue program in Oregon;

\$400 million in low-income home energy assistance for State grants;

\$448 million unrequested funds for State children's health insurance programs, and;

a half a billion dollars for wildfire management and suppression.

Now, these are valuable projects, but they don't belong in an emergency war supplemental. They appear to be nothing more than an attempt to buy votes at the expense of our soldiers in the war on terror. The supplemental is meant to be an emergency troop funding vehicle and there is no excuse for \$20 billion worth of pork in that supplemental.

Let this Congress respect our soldiers and deny this pork.

KOSOVO

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to express my deep concern over the recent Department of Defense proposal to remove combat status from American soldiers serving in Kosovo. This summer, roughly 400 Minnesota National Guard soldiers who serve in my district will once again answer the call to duty in Kosovo. Almost every one of these 400 soldiers from my district will be going for the second or third time since September 11. In addition to the financial hardship these soldiers and their families will endure, the Department of Defense is asking them to suffer further by reclassifying this mission. Reclassification will cost American soldiers more than